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STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U.S.D.A. Washington, D. C. April 14, 1953. SS 125

Favorable Crop Progress

Favorable progress in farm activities and crop development during March resulted in a generally "early spring." Fall-sown grains, pasture, and hay crops have emerged from winter dormancy in the northernmost areas and prospects mostly are favorable except that development of winter wheat is retarded in the Central and Southern Great Plains. Plowing, preparation of seedbeds, and spring seeding is mostly advanced, though relatively dry seedbeds have delayed planting in the Montana-North Dakota area. Soil moisture is generally adequate, except in the Great Plains. Virtually all snow in agricultural areas had melted by April 1 and the water had been absorbed with little runoff. Irrigation water supplies appear satisfactory in northern portions but in the south they range down to dangerously short in parts of Arizona.

Farm Stocks of Feed Grains 8% Above April Average

Feed-grain stocks on farms April 1 were nearly a fourth larger than a year ago and about 8 percent above average. Supply per animal unit is more than a fourth larger than a year ago; larger than any April supply except 1943, 1949, and 1950.

Larger Corn Stocks

Stocks of 1,466 million bushels of corn are 39 percent larger than April 1 farm stocks a year ago and 15 percent above the April average. Farms in the North Central region had about 1,309 million bushels of corn, about 57 percent more than a year ago and about 27 percent more than average. In the North Atlantic region, farm stocks of corn were 18 percent larger than a year ago and 39 percent above average. Stocks were smaller than a year ago and smaller than average in the South Atlantic, South Central, and Western regions.

Smaller Stocks of Oats on Farms

Stocks of oats on farms, at 457 million bushels, are 12 percent smaller than a year ago and are below average.

Barley Stocks Below Average

The 57 million bushels of barley on farms is 21 million less than a year ago and 24 million—nearly 30 percent—below average, reflecting the small 1952 crop.

Wheat Stocks on Farms Larger than Average

The 268 million bushels of wheat remaining on farms is a third larger than a year ago and a sixth larger than average.

PARITY PRICES FOR FARM PRODUCTS AND ACTUAL PRICES RECEIVED

COMMODITY AND UNIT	ACTUAL PRICE		PARITY PRICE
	Feb. 15 1953	Mar. 15 1953	Mar. 15 1953
Wheat, bu. dol.	2.05	2.10	2.43
Corn, bu. dol.	1.43	1.46	1.77
Peanuts, lb. ct.	11.0	11.1	13.2
Cotton, lb. ct. 1/	30.19	31.52	34.10
Potatoes, bu. dol.	1.79	1.64	1.66
Hogs, 100 lb. dol.	19.30	20.20	20.50
Beef cattle, 100 lb. dol.	18.80	17.80	21.30
Veal calves, 100 lb. dol. 2/	22.50	20.60	23.70
Lambs, 100 lb. dol.	20.40	20.30	23.00
Butterfat, lb. ct.	66.8	66.6	75.0
Milk, wholesale, 100 lb. .. dol.	4.64	4.43	4.72
Chickens, live, lb. ct.	26.6	27.5	30.9
Eggs, doz. ct.	42.0	44.7	47.3

1/ American upland cotton.

2/ Revised.

3/ Preliminary.

4/ Transitional parity.

Disappearance of wheat from farms since July 1 last year totals 1,086 million bushels compared with 856 million bushels during the same period a year earlier.

Farm Stocks of Other Grains

Rye stocks of 2.4 million bushels on farms are the smallest for April 1, except in 1947, in the 14-year series of comparable record. The 58 million bushels of soybeans still on farms, while only slightly less than a year ago, are otherwise the largest farm stocks of record. Flaxseed stocks on farms, at 7.4 million bushels, are nearly a fifth smaller than a year ago, but near average.

Winter Wheat Crop Below Average; Prospects Improved

Prospects for the 1953 winter wheat crop have improved by 103 million bushels since December 1. The forecast is for 714

Prices Received and Prices Paid by Farmers Index Numbers, 1910-14 = 100

	Feb. 1952	Mar. 1952	Jan. 1953	Feb. 1953	Mar. 1953
Prices received by farmers	289	288	267	263	264
Crops	259	265	251	247	253
Food grains	249	251	245	240	246
Feed grains and hay	230	229	214	206	208
Tobacco	436	435	419	424	424
Cotton	313	309	252	255	266
Fruit	168	176	208	209	215
Truck crops	217	265	237	237	248
Oil-bearing crops	296	284	291	287	291
Livestock and products	317	310	281	277	274
Meat animals	377	372	303	305	301
Dairy products	317	305	296	286	277
Poultry and eggs	181	177	218	206	216
Prices paid by farmers:					
All commodities	276	275	267	264	266
Commodities used in living	271	271	268	266	269
Commodities used in production	281	280	265	261	262
All commodities, interest, taxes, and wage rates	288	288	282	280	281
Parity ratio (prices rec'd to prices paid by farmers)	100	100	95	94	94

million bushels, two-thirds as large as the bumper 1952 crop, but 10 percent smaller than average. A generally mild winter and early spring have materially improved the outlook for the crop over a major portion of the country, particularly in the Pacific Northwest and much of the eastern half of the country. Wheat remains in a precarious condition in portions of western Kansas, the Oklahoma Panhandle, southeastern Colorado, New Mexico and the High Plains of Texas. There, a considerable acreage has been abandoned and survival of much of the remaining crop depends upon timely rainfall.

Abandonment and diversion to uses other than grain is indicated at 12.2 million acres, compared with 5.6 million acres in 1952 and 16.0 million acres in 1951. Of this year's total, 9.5 million acres are in the 5-State area of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, New Mexico, and Colorado.

The yield of wheat per acre is forecast at 12.9 bushels per seeded acre, compared with 18.8 bushels in 1952, and 11.6 bushels in 1951. The 10-year average yield is 15.6 bushels per seeded acre.

Condition of Rye Crop Improved

Condition of rye crop was 82 percent of normal on April 1. This is a sharp improvement over last December, when conditions was only 67 percent, but is still 5 points below April 1 last year and 4 points below average.

Record Orange Crop; Fewer Grapefruit

The orange crop for the 1952-53 season is estimated at a record high of 120.9 million boxes—2 percent more than last season and 18 percent above average. Grapefruit production is estimated at 37 million boxes—9 percent less than last season and 28 percent less than average. California lemons are forecast at 12.8 million boxes, the same as last season and slightly above average.

Florida citrus trees are in excellent condition. Texas growing conditions were generally favorable during March and trees have a fairly good set of new fruit. Prospects are much better than a year ago. California weather during March was relatively favorable for citrus despite a few frosty nights and deficient rainfall.

Peach Prospects Good

Prospects for the 1953 crop of peaches in the 10 Southern States are very good in all areas. The 80 percent condition reported on April 1 is 8 points above a year ago, 15 points above two years ago and 11 points above the April 1 average.

10% More Spring Vegetables for Fresh Market

Spring production of commercial vegetables for fresh market may be a tenth larger than last spring or average, based on current indications. Largest increases over last spring will be in onions, tomatoes, cabbage, lettuce, asparagus, and sweet corn.

Pasture Condition Below Average

Condition of farm pastures on April 1 averaged 81 percent of normal—2 points below average and 1 point lower than a year ago. Conditions varied from well above average in much of the South to the poorest spring prospects since 1937 in the Western Region.

Milk Production Sets New Record for March

Milk production on farms increased seasonally during March, and continued at a record-breaking pace. Production in March totaled 10.1 billion pounds, 7 percent above last March, and 3 percent above the previous record set in 1945. First quarter milk production totaled 27.3 billion pounds, equivalent to an annual rate of 123 billion pounds on a seasonally adjusted basis. Output per cow was above April 1 a year ago in all regions except the West.

Fewer Layers, but Record Number Eggs Per Hen in March

Farm flocks laid 6,298 million eggs in March—1 percent less than in March last year, but about the same as the 1942-51 average. The rate of egg production in March was 17.9 eggs per layer, a record high for the month, compared with 17.7 last year and the average of 16.6 eggs. The Nation's farm flock averaged 351,088,000 layers in March—3 percent less than in March last year. Chicks and young chickens of this year's hatching on farms April 1 are estimated at 215,159,000—1 percent less than a year ago, but 5 percent above average. Farmers expressed their intentions on February 1 to buy 4 percent fewer baby chicks this year. But egg prices, compared with last year, have strengthened considerably since February and feed prices have been declining.

Record March Price for Eggs

Farmers received an average of 44.7 cents per dozen for eggs in mid-March—the highest price of record for the month. The average seasonal decrease from mid-February to mid-March is 0.4 cent, but this year prices advanced 2.7 cents per dozen.

Feeding Ratios Favorable

The March egg-feed ratio was much more favorable than a year ago because of high egg prices and lower feed prices. The turkey-feed ratio was also more favorable.

Prices Received and Prices Paid Go Up 1 Point

The index of prices received by farmers rose 1 point during the month ended March 15 to 264 percent of the 1910-14 base. A year ago the index was 288. The record high, reached in February 1951, was 313. The parity index (prices paid, interest, taxes, and wage rates) advanced 1 point to 281, 7 points lower than a year ago. The parity ratio in mid-March was 94; a year ago it stood at 100.

Farm Employment Up Seasonally

8.8 million people were engaged in farm work late in March, up seasonally from the 7.6 million working on farms a month earlier, and 45,000 more than a year earlier. This is the first month since October 1948 that total farm employment has shown an increase over the corresponding month a year earlier. The increase can be attributed to the very favorable weather during the survey week which permitted field work in nearly all parts of the country.

Farm Wage Rates 2 Percent Higher Than Year Ago

Farm wage rates averaged 2 percent above a year earlier around April 1. The weighted hourly average of all rates rose 1 cent to \$0.581. This is one of the smallest increases over a year earlier that has been reported at any time in the last two years.

Farm Population Continues to Decline

Farm population in April 1952 totaled about 24,819,000 persons. This was 15.9 percent of the total population. In 1950, 16.6 percent of the population lived on farms.

Civilian Employment Up 1.8 Million From Last March

Civilian employment totaled 61.5 million in March—600,000 more than in February and 1,800,000 more than in March a year ago. 1.7 million persons were unemployed in March—100,000 fewer than a month ago or in March 1952.

First-Quarter Cash Receipts Off 2% From Last Year

Cash receipts from farm marketings in the first quarter of 1953 totaled 6.6 billion dollars, down 2 percent from last year. An increase of 6 percent in the volume of marketings was more than offset by lower average prices.

CURRENT INDEXES FOR AGRICULTURE

INDEX NUMBERS	BASE PERIOD	March 1953
Prices received by farmers	1910-14=100	264
Prices paid by farmers, interest, taxes and wage rates	1910-14=100	281
Parity ratio	1910-14=100	94
Wholesale prices of food	1910-14=100	1/ 105
Retail prices of food	1910-14=100	1/ 112
Farm wage rates	1910-14=100	1/ 514
Weekly factory earnings	1910-14=100	1/ 148

PRODUCTION COMPARISONS	Jan.-Mar. 1952	Jan.-Mar. 1953
Milk, (bil. lb.)	25.7	27.3
Eggs, (bil.)	17.4	17.1
Beef, (dr. wt., mil. lb.)	2/ 1,170	2/ 1,376
Lamb & Mutton (dr.wt., mil. lb.)	2/ 100	2/ 115
Pork & lard (mil. lb.)	2/ 2,342	2/ 1,979
All meats (dr.wt., mil.lb.)	2/ 3,691	2/ 3,571

1/ February figure.

2/ January-February under Federal inspection.